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Sailor's Naturalized New Year's Resolution

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[NO COMMENTS]

By Personnel Specialist Seaman Josephine Fabia, Naval Hospital Bremerton's Human Resource Department



According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services , members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible to apply for United States citizenship under special provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Editors Note: There are some resolutions that resonate as a compelling testament to Navy Medicine's theme of a 'New Year, New You.' Personnel Specialist Seaman Josephine Fabia, Naval Hospital Bremerton took the oath of allegiance to become a U.S. citizen at a naturalization ceremony Jan. 8.

I was so happy and filled with a lot of emotion after the ceremony was over. I had to run outside I was so excited and jumping for joy. I did this process on my own, worked towards it, and didn't give up. This is a big step for me. I met others who had been trying for years to get their citizenship and have struggled to complete all the requirements.

I'm a Republic of the Marshall Islands native, and becoming a

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I was brought up knowing that in order to get something, you have to do it yourself, and be dedicated and determined.

U.S. citizen is not just the culmination of my journey from my isolated island nation in the Northern Pacific to the continental United States, but it also demonstrated my determination to the task to make it happen.

There were a lot of steps involved in this process. I wanted to begin the process earlier but waited until after boot camp and until I reported to my first duty station at NHB approximately 10 months ago. I was brought up knowing that in order to get something, you have to do it yourself, and be dedicated and determined.

Almost immediately, I contacted the Navy Legal Service Officer at Submarine Base Bangor and received guidance on how to proceed step-by-step, what paperwork was required and other pertinent details such as when and where to get fingerprinted as part of the process. After turning in all my paperwork and associated documents proving my citizenship with the Marshall Islands, five months went by and then I received my appointment letter to go back to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office for an interview. After the interview, came the test, which for me, was more a formality.

I came in prepared. I was ready. Next thing I knew, there was a ceremony at noon. I was joined by people from 27 other nations to take the oath, including another from Marshall Islands, and seven others also in the military.

The entire process used to be an arduous red-tape, bureaucratic task for many, including active-duty servicemembers. But since 9/11, military officials have worked the past 14 years with their USCIS counterparts to make the procedure less time-consuming and more streamlined.

According to the USCIS, members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible to apply for United States citizenship under special provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

There are certain requirements such as the service member has to be in good standing and serving honorably on active duty. Other qualifications to become a



I'm a Republic of the Marshall Islands native, and becoming a U.S. citizen is not just the culmination of my journey from my isolated island nation in the

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citizen of the United States include knowledge of the English language; knowledge of U.S. government and history (civics); and taking the Oath of Allegiance to the U.S. Constitution to show attachment to the United States.

Northern Pacific to the continental United States, but it also demonstrated my determination to the task to make it happen.

According to my department leading chief petty officer, Chief Personnel Specialist Dawn Molinero, “We are very proud for Seaman Fabia. She has been so dedicated. I would see her always studying, even walking going over her list of study questions. What she has accomplished is very special and noteworthy. There are those her age who don’t know what it means to put in that extra effort on top of her duties as a Navy Sailor. To get her citizenship really means a lot to her and I loved to see her get it. Fabia has her citizenship, she is able to have full computer access which will heighten her administrative ability and customer service skill.

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I didn’t want to depend on my parents. I wanted to prove that I could follow in the footsteps of my dad, a retired boatswain mate senior chief. My parents are very proud and happy of me. Now I really feel like an expert doing my job to the best of my ability. I like providing the best customer service I can to those who need help coming into HR and make sure they are happy. Just as I’m helping someone, everything I do now will also help

me in my future.”

I’m also starting college-level core classes. My goal is to start my general education classes and plan a route towards child development and becoming a business major.

Editors Note: All foreign-born active duty personnel who have or are serving after September 11, 2001 are eligible to file for immediate citizenship under the special wartime provisions in Section 329 of the INA. This section also covers veterans of designated past wars and conflicts. For more information for those assigned in Navy Region Northwest, please call NBK Bangor NLSO 360-396-6003.

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